

Ward 6 Staff



Steve Kozachik



Ann Charles



Diana Amado



Amy Stabler



Alison Miller



Caroline Lee



Ward 6 Newsletter

Tucson First

December 7, 2015

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Finances

Mayor, Council, and City Manager Finance Retreat



In simplest terms, our budget situation could be called a heavy lift. And yet, with a plan in place and the perseverance of all city workers (staff, front line workers, union and non-union, and elected officials), we'll get the budget issue resolved.

The caveat is that each of us has to set aside our sacred cows and focus on long term solutions. Short term, one-time fixes are done. The bond rating agencies told us so. It's time to roll up our sleeves and focus on a four to five year time horizon, put a plan in place, and stick with it.

Last Friday we spent three hours talking numbers. We're going to start our FY'17 budget talks with a deficit of around \$42M. All things being equal with respect to projected revenues and expenses, that figure is north of \$63M in FY'20. Business



Important Phone Numbers

Tucson Police Department
911 or nonemergency
791-4444

Water Issues
791-3242/800-598-9449
Emergency: 791-4133

Street Maintenance
791-3154

Graffiti Removal
792-2489

Abandoned Shopping Carts
791-3171

Neighborhood Resources
837-5013

SunTran/SunLink
792-9222
TDD: 628-1565

Environmental Services
791-3171

Park Wise
791-5071

Planning and Development Services 791-5550

Pima Animal Care Center
724-5900

Pima County Vector Control
Cockroach: 443-6501
Mosquito: 243-7999

Continued: A Message From Steve

can't be 'as usual.'

We were presented with a very general plan to get the operational side of the budget to a structurally balanced condition by the end of FY'18. That's a \$49.5M lift. To understand the magnitude of that deficit, the arithmetic is 2.5 years (January 1st, 2016 through July 1st, 2018), with about 260 workdays per year, divided by the deficit we're trying to tackle. That means that shortfall equates to about \$76K per day between now and July 1st, 2018. It's worth establishing a plan and moving with it as soon as we can.

The discussion we had on Friday did not lay in concrete any specific direction or plans. We assessed the situation and discussed possible options. We'll start the more formal budget talks early next year.

In recent years, we've refinanced debt to free up cash (which only extends our debt for longer periods of time), sold land (we're almost out of land to sell), furloughed workers (which kills morale and reduces our ability to deliver services), taken money from our reserves (we're already at half of our own policy for reserve balances), and settled lawsuits in our favor (not the rabbit we can expect Mike Rankin to keep pulling out of a hat).

Options we're going to look at when putting the current plan into place will include things such as:

- a) Reduced staffing levels
- b) Hiring freeze
- c) Early retirement option for senior employees
- d) Planned attrition
- e) Consolidation of department functions
- f) Partnerships with the County and other jurisdictions
- g) Review of transit delivery methods
- h) Participating in crafting legislation relative to public safety pension ballot measures
- i) Discussion of new revenue sources, to include possible bed tax, sales tax, property tax increases, annexation, drawing General Funds from enterprise departments
- j) Shifting General Fund work tasks into enterprise departments

That is not an exhaustive list, and it's very general and vague by design. It's extremely early in the discussion so there's no way we can have meat on those bones yet.

We don't have time to mess around debating and looking for the magic potion that'll fix everything at once. That doesn't exist. Friday was our first look for this fiscal year. As in years past, I'll be working towards a structurally balanced budget. That will again mean



hard decisions. And yet, if we make them, the long term best interests of the City will benefit.

Transportation Funding and the Sonoran Corridor

With the finance plan conversation in play, it's only fair to remind us all that for the past three years we've been saying that staffing has been cut to the bone, and that we need to focus on growing the economic pie if we're going to advance the region. While I understand the structural issue we have with the budget, the message about expanding our economy still has to be the way out of this.

For one, leaving over a million dollars in uncollected performance bond money on the table while we tell 40 probationary workers who left jobs to come work for the City that we can't afford them is a curious mixed message.

I've already asked for a study session item next week to talk about how to get the Sonoran Corridor revisited. We need to see manufacturing employment opportunities developed in this area of our region. Our piece of funding the road project out there is an investment in the structural budget mess we're solving.

Now is not the time to be sending messages to the business community that we're going to make it more difficult to thrive in Tucson. It's also not the time to send the message to our Federal delegation that we're not willing to do our part in regional investment.

On November 30th, the House and Senate came to a compromise agreement on the Federal Highway-Transit Reauthorization Bill, HR22. They all have some acronym attached. This one's Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act – the FAST Act. I wonder if they have some staffer who's specifically assigned to coming up with those names.

The measure will provide over \$300B in highway funding over the next 5 years. It does not include a gas tax increase. What they'll do is tap into Federal Reserve surplus capital and come out with a 15% increase in highway funding, along with an 18% increase in transit funds.

Our delegation was able to get the following provision added to the bill:

Designation of the Sonoran Corridor along State Route 40 connecting Interstate Route 19 & Interstate Route 10 South of the Tucson International Airport as a High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System.

They're still fighting the good fight back there on our behalf. My invitation to County Board Chair Sharon Bronson and County Administrator Chuck Huckleberry to join us at our study session on Tuesday, December 15th to talk about this project was warmly accepted. We can talk all day about the deficit, and we have been since 2009, but until we get high-paying manufacturing and logistics jobs popping up out around Raytheon and the airport, we won't fully finish the fiscal work we have to do.

City Employees

Last month we had an update on how we're doing as an organization with respect to paying



Important Phone Numbers

Senator John McCain (R)
520-670-6334

Senator Jeff Flake (R)
520-575-8633

Congresswoman Martha McSally (R)
(2nd District)
(202) 225-2542
Tucson Office: 520-881-3588

Congressman Raul Grijalva (D)
(3rd District)
520-622-6788

Governor Doug Ducey (R)
602-542-4331
Tucson office:
520-628-6580

Mayor Jonathan Rothschild
520-791-4201

ZoomTucson Map
<http://maps.tucsonaz.gov/zoomTucson/>

men and women – equal pay concerns. I shared some graphs in a previous newsletter that showed the City’s guidelines are keeping us in good standing with respect to payment of men and women in similar job categories. In some, women were behind men, and in others, they’re ahead of men.

We directed staff to share the City workforce numbers with the Tucson-Pima County Women’s Commission and other stakeholder groups. The general reception was very positive. We serve as a good model for other jurisdictions. We’re following up with some more detailed information requested by some of those groups.

We also directed City Procurement to draft some standard contract language that assures our contractors are complying with the Equal Pay Act. The language that’s now being reviewed by the legal folks is:

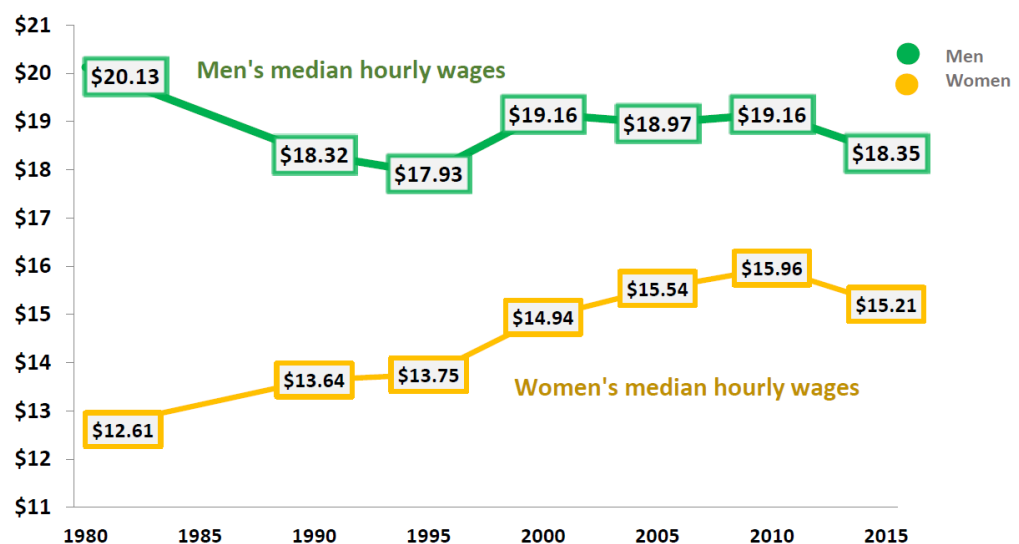
“Contractor shall comply with Sec. 17-XX of the Tucson City Code, relating to Equal Pay for male and female employees performing substantially similar work.”

Looks pretty straight forward and appropriate.

Since that meeting, I was contacted by Igor Shegolev, a pension and H.R. expert I invited to participate in a discussion of our pension issues last year. He’s now the President of HR Know Consulting, a group that works the gamut of H.R. related issues. In that regard, he shared with me some current data that relates to the equal pay topic.

His study concluded the wage gap between men and women is gradually narrowing. Here’s a table that graphically shows the trends:

TABLE 4: The Median Wage Gap Between Men and Women (Source: Economic Policy Institute)



Our track record is superior to that of the general trend curves. We’ll keep at it and continue to narrow the gap.

Igor also shared some pension information. Our non-public safety pension plan (TSRS) is in relatively good shape compared to the public safety plan. We control the provisions that guide TSRS. The State's responsible for public safety.

Our TSRS plan is approximately 70% funded. The average nationwide is about 74%. That's okay, but it also needs to be placed in the context of a nationwide average of being fully funded back in 2001. Remember that there was a recession since then and we're still climbing out. Pension fund managers take contributions and invest them. They base some of the future projections for the health of plans on assumed rates of return. Nationally, they're assuming a 7.69% rate. We're a little bit under that. According to the HR study, "this assumption is based on past performance and is overly optimistic." They cite yields on both Treasury Bonds and Corporate Bonds falling, as well as dividend yields on S&P 500 stocks.

It was a lengthy report so I won't plaster the newsletter with a pile of data from it, but the point is that in the context of our budget and long term planning, the pension plan we can control is also of some concern and will need to be watched closely. As funding levels fluctuate, so do contribution levels by both employees and employers. Our contributions to the TSRS plan come from our General Fund. It's worth noting.

The City and Low-Income Support – Tucson Water

Our financial condition isn't all headed in the wrong direction. We're still offering some very important low-income assistance you may want to look into. Tucson Water is one good example of where that's available.

Beginning in 2013, we started offering an adjustment on low-income qualifying customers' water bills. It went from a 30% adjustment in 2013 to a 50% adjustment now. There are currently over 47,000 people participating, and they're saving an average of \$205 per year on their water bills. The number of people in the program has nearly doubled in the past three years.

The program costs Tucson Water about \$850K annually, but it's a part of what we're doing to ease the burden low-income residents feel while we all climb back to financial health after the recession. Take a look at this table and you'll see how we compare as a utility with some other jurisdictions:

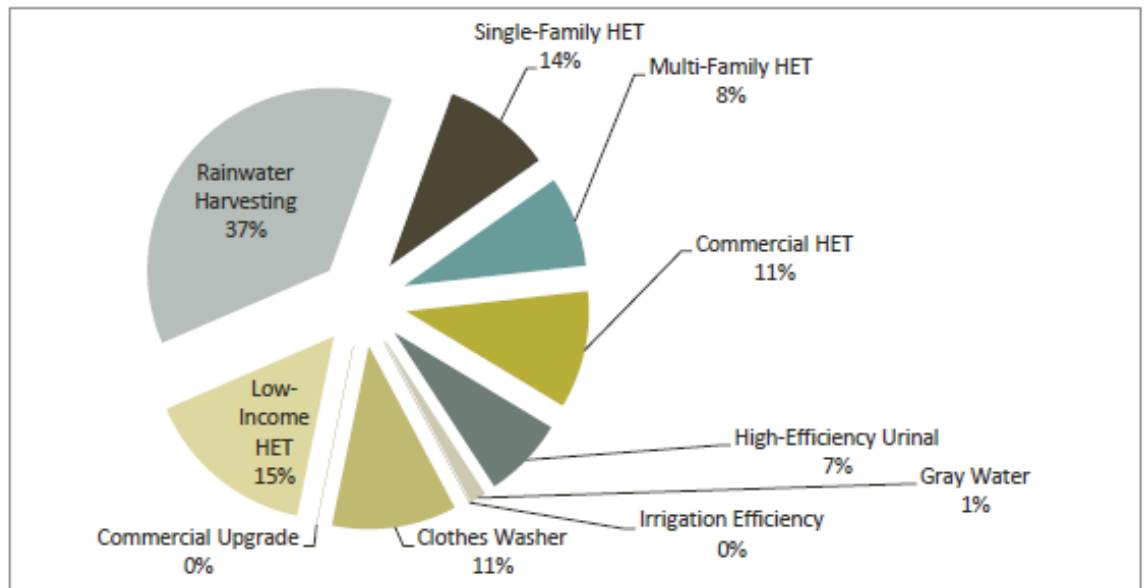
Utility Name	Low-Income Program?	Income Qualifying Level	Benefit	Renewal Frequency
Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, NM	YES	133% of Federal Poverty Level	Reduction of monthly bill depending on income level	Annual
City of Las Cruces, NM	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A
El Paso Water Utilities, TX	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A
Las Vegas Valley Water District, NV	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of Phoenix, AZ	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of Mesa, AZ	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of Glendale, AZ	NO	N/A	N/A	N/A

We're going to continue working on the deficit issue, but that doesn't have to come at the expense of how we reach out into the community and work with people who are having a tough time making ends meet.

Water Conservation

We're also going to continue offering incentives for people to conserve water by participating in a variety of programs we offer. You pay a small fee in your water bill each month that we allocate to water conservation rebates. Here's how those rebate dollars are currently being invested throughout the community:

Expenditures by Program for FY 2015-16



That shows pretty clearly you value rainwater harvesting as a way of doing your part in conserving this critical asset. The low-income incentive for installing high efficiency toilets is also a big part of the program at 15% of funds invested.

There's been a lot of discussion on the value of the rainwater harvesting rebate. The utility's pushback is largely based on the difficulty in measuring the savings, and therefore justifying use of ratepayer dollars on something we can't necessarily defend on a purely financial basis. But as we take water from the roadways and divert it into rights-of-ways with more trees and other landscaping, we're reducing the impact on the asphalt and mitigating the heat island effect with new plant growth. Can we measure it? Not precisely. But anyone who'd challenge such an incentive program would be hard-pressed to suggest the assumed benefits aren't for real. More on that to come.

Water Banking

Still on the water topic, we got some bad news last week from the Arizona Water Banking Authority. We agreed to sell that agency Long Term Water Storage Credits that they use to set water aside in our storage facilities for later use – in times of drought or reduced flows coming from the CAP, for example. We've been assuming about \$3M in Tucson Water revenues each year for those storage credits.

This year, the Water Banking Authority advised us that it will be unable to purchase those credits. It's a state agency and due to the state's financial condition, it doesn't have the cash. We lose the ability to work with that group in setting aside water, but we were also budgeting with the assumption those dollars would come in during this fiscal year. That's a \$3M bust in the TW budget.

Tucson Water isn't going to have to respond to those lost dollars by increasing your rates or reducing any of the rebate incentive programs I've just described. They've looked at their operating budget and will shift some of the personnel savings they're realizing due to existing vacancies over to cover the shortfall. I should note though, those vacancies are a part of what the City Manager is also looking at for the purpose of getting the overall budget in balance. It's a well we can't go to again.

We're anticipating that after 2016 the Water Banking Authority will be able to resume making purchases. That will depend on how much funding is available for the Tucson Active Management Area and what volume of water will be available to set aside. The Water Bank's funding comes from well withdrawal fees, which is something they're going to continue collecting in the future. However, we're not going to assume we'll receive those dollars any longer when putting together the Tucson Water budget. Just one more change associated with how we're moving the budget conversation forward.

Back To Low-Income Support



HUD Services

Back to how we're not balancing our budget on the back of the needy in the community, our Housing and Community Development people are out soliciting agencies to which we'll allocate some of our HUD funding aimed at addressing a variety of needs throughout the community.

First, if you're involved with a social service provider and would like to ask about the programs, the contact people, and specific areas of expertise are:

Ramona Williams (General Funding questions) – ramona.williams@tucsonaz.gov / 837.5340

Dana Mellors (Emergency Solutions Grants – ESG) dana.mellors@tucsonaz.gov / 837.5343

Tracy Odishaw (Community Development Block Grants) tracy.odishaw@tucsonaz.gov / 837.5333

Teresa Williams (Homeless Preference Programs) Teresa.williams@tucsonaz.gov / 837.5006

Each year we update our consolidated plan relative to how we allocate Federal funds to support of the needy. The funding comes with Federal requirements, so if you're with an agency that might be interested in participating in this solicitation, you're well-advised to participate in one of the educational forums our HCD people are offering. Here are the dates and

locations for those:

Tuesday, December 8, 2015		OR	Wednesday, December 9, 2015	
Location: Pima County Housing Center 801 W. Congress St Tucson, AZ			Location: Community Resource Center 320 N. Commerce Park Loop Tucson, AZ	
Time: 11:00 A.M.			Time: 2:00 P.M.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">ZoomGrants OverviewCOT RFP Process Overview and Questions for Human/Public Service and Homeless Preference Program			<ul style="list-style-type: none">ZoomGrants OverviewCOT RFP Process Overview and Questions for Human/Public Service and Homeless Preference Program	

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend one or both sessions.

They've already begun accepting pre-applications (due on December 18th) so this process is one your agency should jump on if you're interested in FY'17 funds. They'll begin accepting final applications on December 18th, and the due date for those is January 12, 2016.

We do a lot for those in the region who are less fortunate than others. These Federal programs are how we continue to stay connected and help sustain individuals and families who need a hand.

Parking Fees

For a couple of years, both Paul and I have been pushing TDOT to come to grips with the fact that our parking fines are confiscatory. Last October (2014) we approved a plan to reduce the fines. It was contingent on the new parking meter system going live. That's scheduled to finally happen this month.

Given that, once the plan is operative (we're told that'll happen on December 9th) the new fines will become official. The changes we've authorized will result in the following new policies:

- Park Tucson will collect the parking fine payments for the first 30 days. By having them do it, you aren't going to have to pay a court processing fee or the associated State surcharge or late fees. If you let the fine go beyond the first 30 days though, you will pay those fees and have to work through the court system.
- New, lower fines will be in effect for the base fine, nuisance violations, safety, and accessible violations. The State will still get its pound of flesh (we can't do anything about that), but since we're lowering our base fines, its cut will be lower, as well.

Here's what we're implementing:

Parking Violation Type	Base Fine	Court Processing Fee	State Surcharge (83%)	Other State Fees	Total Fine
Basic	\$14.75	\$0	\$12.25	\$15	\$42
Nuisance	\$25.68	\$0	\$21.32	\$15	\$62
Safety	\$60.11	\$0	\$49.89	\$15	\$125
Accessible	\$211.48	\$0	\$175.52	\$15	\$402

It took a while to get the new system bids awarded and the new meters installed and programmed, but now we're ready to go. I'm grateful to my colleague Paul Cunningham for working together with me on this. It'll set a much better rate structure in place and hopefully won't drive people away from our downtown core where much of the enforcement is going on.

Reid Park Zoo Items



It's that time of year again – time for Zoo Lights out at Reid Park Zoo. Running from now until December 27th, the zoo will be open from 6pm until 8pm each night with the place lit up for the holidays. There'll be carols, free cookies, hot cocoa (for \$1) and Santa. Admission will be \$9 for adults and \$5 for the kids between ages 2 and 14. Of course if you're a zoo member, your discounts apply.

Zoo Lights information/tickets from Reid Park Zoo: <http://bit.ly/1lwOOd9>

Reid Park Zoo: <http://bit.ly/1dJgCDh>

On another Parks-related note, the Parks and Recreation Spring Activity Guides are now out. Signing up someone you know and love for a class or more would be a great Christmas gift. You can get the guides at all P&R facilities, including district offices, centers, and the pools. Or, just check out this link and you can find all the information about the leisure classes, aquatics, sports programs and the rest: <http://bit.ly/1u7q4db>



Southwest Key Tour

That's the logo for the Administration for Children and Families, a sub-unit of Health and Human Services which by law must accept unaccompanied children who are caught by Border Patrol. One of the prime missions of ACF is "releasing unaccompanied children to qualified sponsors and family members who are determined to be capable of providing for the child's physical and mental well-being." To that end, Southwest Key is the agency under local con-

tract to receive kids and work to ensure that a safe stop is next in line for them.

Last week, I joined a few others to tour the SW Key facility here in Tucson. I had wanted to see firsthand how this extremely vulnerable population was being cared for. You can read the mission statement, but seeing the work really affirms the commitment the staff has for the safety of the kids.

Kids in these facilities may have histories of abuse. While working with the women and their kids who were being dropped off at the Greyhound Depot, we heard plenty of stories of that nature. The unaccompanied children are coming from the same backgrounds. With that in mind, the Office of Refugee Resettlement takes great pains to make sure the kids are in a safe and nurturing environment.

Back in 2002, the Homeland Security Act was passed. With that, Congress transferred the care of these kids to Heath and Human Services and adopted a child welfare-based model for their care. Previously, it had been more of an adult detention model. What we observed at SW Key very much fits the current philosophy.

The facility can house up to about 280 minors plus staff. The kids are well-fed, are given schooling every day, have case managers assigned who are in tune with each child's history and personal needs, and they have a chance to call home on a regular basis. The goal is moving them to a family member who's in the U.S. The SW Key staff and Heath and Human Services are committed to ensuring that home is a safe and caring environment.

For the first nine years at Office of Refugee Resettlement, between 7,000 and 8,000 were served annually. In the past couple of years that number has jumped to over 24,000 in FY'13, and over 57,000 in FY'14. The kids are largely from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. In the vast majority of cases, consulate offices are heavily engaged in assuring the welfare of the kids.

Given the direct involvement my staff and I have had with the whole migrant family issue, it was important to me to be able to see the work being performed by SW Key from the inside. The program is well-balanced, and the staff members clearly have their hearts in the right place as they demonstrate compassion for the kids and sensitivity to the conditions from which they've come.

These kids are victims of oppression in their countries of origin. It'd be nice if the amped-up rhetoric we're hearing in the media about refugees and terrorists caught a little dose of the reality of what's happening in these kids' lives so we don't conflate issues without any basis in fact.

One More Law Enforcement Item

Our new police chief was sworn in last week, although he's not scheduled to begin his work here until after the first of the year.

Ahead of his arrival, TPD is asking citizens to complete a survey that'll provide a good baseline insight into how the community views our police department's work. The survey only takes a couple of minutes to complete. It is important information from the perspec-

tive of staying connected with you, continuing to do the things we're doing well, and improving on those that might need a boost.

Here's a link to the survey. I hope you'll take a moment and let us know how you feel:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/TPD2015

A Final Legal Add

As you likely know, we've got two elections lawsuits pending in the courts. One is our appeal of a three-member panel decision that said our current way of electing council members is illegal. We've appealed that to the full 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. We won't know whether or not they take the case until after the first of the year.

The other suit was filed by the two Republican candidates who ran in Wards 2 and 4 this last time around. They're trying to get the election results overturned on the basis that they had more Ward votes than the incumbents. Each of them lost the city-wide count of votes. We'll hear that decision this week. The reality is that the judge has no basis on which to decide in favor of the plaintiffs. I suspect there's some legal maneuver involved in just filing the case.

This past week we were advised of a related petition that has been filed. Here's a copy of the memo we received.

SUBJECT: Application for Initiative Petition 2015-I001
Title: "Ward Only Primary and General Elections"

We received an application to circulate an initiative petition. The subject of the petition is an initiative measure proposing to amend the Tucson City Charter by changing the language in Chapter XVI – Elections, Sec. 9 to read, "Mayor nominated and elected at large; councilmen nominated and elected from their respective wards."

The three persons responsible for the petition are Kile M. Waldrup, Aaron Taylor and Timothy DesJarlais. The applicant and contact person is Timothy DesJarlais.

The petition has been assigned petition number 2015-I001. The number of valid signatures required is 9,241. In accordance with provisions of the Tucson Code, initiative petitions must be filed with the City Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m., July 6, 2017, in order to be placed on the November 7, 2017, General and Special Election ballot. Petitions not received by that time will be null and void.

Please contact my office if you have any questions regarding this matter. Thank you.

While that group is out gathering signatures to get the Ward-only system onto the ballot, we still have our Charter Review Committee studying that and other options for consideration as ballot measures. Depending on what the 9th Circuit decides, there could be a few different voting options placed on the 2016 ballot. You'll be reading plenty about this in the days to come. It'll make the run-up to next year's elections just a little bit more interesting than otherwise.

Special Election

On another elections-related note, the State has called for a special election next May 17th on the issue of school funding. Here's a very rough outline of why it's coming.

The voters determined that the State was to pay a cost of living increase on public school funding. The State did it for a while and then decided to stop, citing budget difficulties. They were sued by the schools and lost. The back-payments due to the system are in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

The State is looking for a way out. To that end, the Governor has proposed dipping into the State Land Trust Fund and pulling money out of that to pay the schools. To do that, they need voter approval. That's where you come in.

The Metropolitan Education Commission is hosting speakers who will make their pitch for both the pro and the con on the ballot question. On Wednesday, December 16th, Dr. Timothy Ogle (Arizona School Boards Association) and Andrew Morrill (Arizona Education Association) will speak on the issue. Then, on January 20th, State Treasurer Jeff DeWit will take the stage. The first group is in favor of taking the money from the Trust Fund, and Treasurer DeWit is not.

Both forums will be held at the downtown library, 101 N Stone at 4pm, and both will have time for Q&A interaction with the speakers. This is a significant issue for the public education system. It's important that as many attend and participate as can.

The Trust Fund is already earmarked to fund public education. The State is proposing to use it to settle debts, as declared by the Court. It's also proposing a level of funding that will impact the principal reserves in the Fund. Not only are they using education money to pay education debt, there's some question as to whether dipping into the principal is even legal. As with our elections cases, this will be interesting to watch play out between now and May.

Broadmoor-Broadway Village Trek to Sam Hughes



To Rocco's from BBVN:
Meet just south of the HAWK at 5:45 pm and cross with your neighbors to enjoy Rocco's "Walk the HAWK Special": get a salad, breadsticks, & pizza package for \$8!

*Monday
December 7th
5:45pm*

**Walk the
HAWK**

*Celebrate community
and safely crossing
Broadway at Treat
over local pizza with
your neighbors!!*

To Falora from SHN:
Meet just north of the HAWK at 5:45 pm and cross with your neighbors to enjoy Ari's special: "You walk the HAWK, we'll walk the talk: Stride or ride over to Falora for dinner - we'll buy dessert!"



Tonight beginning at 5:45pm, the Broadmoor-Broadway Village neighborhood (BBVNA) is staging a "Walk the HAWK" event. It's a community building event aimed at supporting the businesses along the Sunshine Mile.

A pedestrian HAWK (which stands for High-

Intensity Activated crossWalK – obviously?) has finally been installed at Broadway and Treat. The residents of BBVNA and Sam Hughes will be using that as the catalyst for this

event. Rocco's Pizza is offering a special and the residents are eager to support the neighbor/business/member of the Broadway Citizen Task Force. Falora is also offering a special in association with the event.

BBVNA residents are going to meet at 5:45pm on the south side of the HAWK and walk to Rocco's. The Sam Hughes residents will meet on the north side of the HAWK and end up at Falora. If you're not from either of the neighborhoods, join in anyway. As I said, this is about community building and support of these local businesses.

Cascade Plaza



In closing, last week I promo'd our upcoming vote on the historic sign being proposed for the shopping center just west of Pinecrest on Speedway. Here's the final proof of the proposed sign. It'll preserve both the Sherwin Williams logo (over 100 years old) and resurrect the Cascade logo on the top portion of the sign.

As I shared with you last week, I hope we can do more of this with other old signs around town.

Sincerely,

Steve Kozachik
Council Member, Ward 6
Ward6@tucsonaz.gov

Events and Entertainment

Opening Reception: *Ocean to Deserts* by Luke Parsons

Saturday, December 12, 2015 | 5 pm – 8 pm

Ward 6 Office, 3202 E 1st St

Join local photographer Luke Parsons for an opening reception to view his *Ocean to Deserts* series on display in the Ward 6 Community Room. Light refreshments will be served. This series of photographs begins on the rocky cliffs of La Jolla and moves inland, ending in the arid grasslands at Cochise Stronghold. As you walk around the room clockwise, you will proceed geographically from west to east, from ocean to deserts. The photographs will be on display through January 3, 2016. www.LukeParsonsPhoto.com

An Imam & a Rabbi Walk into a Room... Shattering Stereotypes**Sunday, December 13, 2015 | 4 pm – 6:30 pm****Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 1300 N Greasewood Rd**

PeaceWalk Tucson invites you to join Imam Watheq Al-Obaidi and Rabbi Thomas Louchheim to discuss what their respective faith traditions really teach about peace, compassion and respect for our fellow human beings. Dr. Al-Obaidi is the Imam of the Muslim Community Center of Tucson and a well-known scholar of Islamic jurisprudence. Thomas Louchheim is the Rabbi of Congregation Or Chadash of Tucson and is well known for his interfaith work in the community. peacewalktucson.org

Opening Reception: “Japanese Influences,” Ceramics by Tucson Clay Art Center**Tuesday, December 8, 2015 | 4 pm – 6 pm****Yume Japanese Gardens of Tucson, 2130 N Alvernon Way**

View the eye-catching dishes, vases, bowls and other creations of the Tucson Clay Art Center, many of which — influenced by calligraphy and ikebana — capture a Japanese flavor. There will be a free opening reception for this exhibition on December 8 from 4-6 pm. Thereafter, works by ceramic artists Betsy Tanzer, Roy Lizama, Jody Saito, and Barclay Dick will be on display until January 8, 9:30 to 4:30 daily. Admission to the exhibition is free with regular admission to the Gardens. www.yumegardens.org

Ongoing...**Tucson Museum of Art**, 140 N Main Ave | www.TucsonMusuemofArt.org*July 17, 2015 – January 3, 2016: “Museum as Sanctuary: Perspectives of Resilience”***Tucson Convention Center**, 260 S Church St | tucsonconventioncenter.com**Meet Me at Maynards**, 311 E Congress St | www.MeetMeatMaynards.com

A social walk/run through the Downtown area. Every Monday, rain or shine, holidays too! Hotel Congress Check-in begins at 5:15pm.

Mission Garden, 929 W Mission Ln | www.tucsonsbirthplace.org

A re-creation of the Spanish Colonial walled garden that was part of Tucson’s historic San Agustin Mission. For guided tours call 520-777-9270.

Children's Museum Tucson, 200 S 6th Ave | www.childrensmuseumtucson.org

Tuesday - Friday: 9:00am - 5:00pm; Saturday & Sunday: 10:00am - 5:00pm

Tucson Botanical Gardens, 2150 N Alvernon Way | www.tucsonbotanical.org*September 11, 2015 – January 3, 2016: “Nature Connects, Art with LEGO Bricks”***Southern Arizona Transportation Museum**, 414 N Toole Ave |www.tucsonhistoricdepot.org**UA Mineral Museum**, 1601 E University Blvd | www.uamineralmuseum.org**Jewish History Museum**, 564 S Stone Ave | www.jewishhistorymuseum.org

Fox Theatre, 17 W Congress St | www.FoxTucsonTheatre.org

Hotel Congress, 311 E Congress St | hotelcongress.com

Loft Cinema, 3233 E Speedway Blvd | www.loftcinema.com

Rialto Theatre, 318 E Congress St | www.rialtotheatre.com

Arizona State Museum, 1013 E University Blvd | www.statemuseum.arizona.edu

Arizona Theater Company, 330 S Scott Ave | www.arizonatheatre.org

The Rogue Theatre, The Historic Y, 300 E University Blvd | www.theroguetheatre.org